

"Please join me in wishing Tracy and Don the very best in their retirement and much success and enjoyment in the endeavors that lie ahead."

Marcelle and I appreciate all she has done and also send Tracy and Don our best wishes.

RECOGNIZING DARN TOUGH VERMONT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, veterans make a valuable addition to any workplace. Vermont companies know this, which is why most employers in the State do their best to recruit former servicemembers. But some go far beyond others in their commitment to employing veterans. Darn Tough Vermont is one such company. Since the Darn Tough brand was created in 2004, consumer interest in the company's famous socks has steadily grown. This is because of the dependability and durability their products are known for. But the nearly 500 employees at Darn Tough, a disproportionately high amount of which are veterans, are what ensures this reputation.

Darn Tough has always been committed to hiring veterans whenever possible. As a trusted supplier of the military, the company understands why it is former servicemembers stand apart from others when it comes to reliability, team orientation, and performing under stress. They know that hiring a veteran is not only a good thing to do; it is an excellent investment for an employer to make. This is why more than 7 percent of employees hired by Darn Tough over the last calendar year were veterans.

In November, the U.S. Department of Labor recognized Darn Tough for its commitment to hiring veterans by awarding them a 2022 HIRE Vets Medallion "gold tier" Award. The award is given to a company who can show that 7 percent of the people it hired in a calendar year are veterans. It can also be awarded to companies who retain more than 75 percent of their annual veteran hires for 12 months or more. Darn Tough exceeded the Labor Department's award criteria in both of these areas. Meeting these benchmarks is doubly impressive, considering veterans make up only 4.7 percent of Vermont's civilian labor pool.

I am always heartened when I learn of a Vermont business who receives honors for so clearly integrating Vermont's values into their operations, which is why I would like to recognize Darn Tough Vermont for leading the State in veteran's hiring and receiving the U.S. Department of Labor's 2022 HIRE Vets Medallion Award. Their commitment to producing the finest products and their demonstrated dedication to veterans make this company one truly worthy of our praise.

I ask unanimous consent that an article from VT Digger on this achievement be printed into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From VT Digger]

DARN TOUGH VERMONT, THE NORTHFIELD SOCK MANUFACTURER, IS GETTING RECOGNITION FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO HIRING AND RETAINING MILITARY VETERANS

"It's just good to be around more people that are veterans," said Jim Decker, chief technology officer at Darn Tough.

Decker, who has worked for the company since 2019, served in the U.S. Army from 1985 to 1989. He joined Darn Tough in 2019, when the company employed about 185 people. The company has experienced explosive growth in the last three years, and it employs nearly 500 people now, he said.

Last month, Darn Tough was awarded a 2022 HIRE Vets Medallion Award from the U.S. Labor Department. Darn Tough is the only Vermont company to have earned the award in the four years that it has been presented.

The awards are based on the percentage of workers hired and retained who are military veterans. To earn the "gold" tier award, the company had to show that 7% of the people it hired in a calendar year were veterans.

"And that's not an easy mark to make, because the overall national percentage of veterans is 5.4%," said Randall Smith, director of the Labor Department's HIRE Vets Medallion program. In Vermont, veterans account for 4.7% of the civilian labor force, Smith said.

One goal of the award, Smith said, is to let veterans know about companies that do an especially good job of hiring and retaining veterans. The program posts a map of award-ees.

Lawrence Forsyth, veterans services coordinator at the Vermont Department of Labor, estimated that Vermont has about 40,000 veterans, many of them older veterans of World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

He said the small number of veterans in Vermont, compounded by the fact that it does not have an active military post, makes it hard for employers to hire veterans.

However, Forsyth said, veterans are "adaptive. They're resilient. They're very team-oriented and they perform under stress. Why wouldn't someone want to hire them?"

Forsyth said he goes four times a year to a recruiting event at Fort Drum in New York to persuade people leaving the military, as well as veterans living there, to move to Vermont. He said he works in partnership with the Vermont State Police, the Vermont National Guard and the Vermont Air National Guard to recruit people leaving active-duty military service.

Forsyth encourages businesses interested in attracting people leaving the armed services to visit the website for Skillsbridge, a U.S. Department of Defense program that pays for internships for up to 160 days, which "could turn into a full-time job," he said.

He said he has placed five veterans through that program in the past two years.

One way Darn Tough retains the veterans it hires is by identifying the skills they bring from their military service, said Jennifer No, the company's talent acquisition recruiter.

"What we do internally is we continue to build on those skills and develop them to positions like the (chief technology officer)," No said.

Businesses could also earn the "gold" award by retaining 75% of the veterans they hired in a calendar year for 12 months or more, Smith said. Forsyth said Darn Tough excels in retention, in addition to recruitment.

"They're always a go-to organization that I send people to," he said.]

TRIBUTE TO JANET GREEN-TUCKER

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize an important person who is critical to the functioning of the U.S. Senate and, more importantly, who has been an important part of the lives of many young Senate families for over three decades.

Janet Green-Tucker, affectionately known as Ms. Janet, will be retiring at the end of this month after 36 years of service as a teacher at the Senate Employees Child Care Center. Having joined the center just a few short years after its opening on February 27, 1984, Janet personified the sense of warmth, skill, patience, and community that are well known to the Senate families.

We have all had teachers who touched our lives, providing guidance during difficult times or sparking our imaginations. Janet has done so for hundreds of children over the years, nourishing young minds at a critical time in their development. She was a walking encyclopedia of wisdom for all families. In fact, at least one of Janet's former students is now a parent herself, making her a "grand-teacher!" For many years she was one-half of the "Green Team" alongside fellow teacher, Phyllis Green, who also retired earlier this year after an impactful decades long career at the center.

Janet is especially beloved by many families on my staff whose children had the privilege of being taught by her: Rayn, Leo, Alex, William, Avery, and Harry. Even children who weren't in her class could always count on a comforting hug in the hallway from Janet. Janet is also adored by her colleagues. She was always willing to go above and beyond, to support fellow teachers new and old, take care of monthly playground inspections, and lend a hand throughout the center no matter the task. And as an avid baker, Janet's colleagues were more than happy to taste her latest treats and would fight for the last crumb.

During the past 36 years, Janet also raised twin boys of her own, Jarrod and Jaron, alongside her husband Marvin, and is now looking forward to spending time with her grandchildren. In 2014, Senator Tom Harkin aptly described the teachers and administrators at the Senate Employees Child Care Center as the "unsung heroes" of the Senate. It is my privilege to sing the praises of Janet as one of those unsung heroes.

I wish her all the best as she embarks on a well-earned retirement.

JOINT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, this explanation reflects the status of negotiations and disposition of issues reached between the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on